



Recreation and Open Space

Vision Statement: Provide and maintain a high quality and environmentally sensitive system of parks, recreational facilities, and open spaces which meet the needs of the entire community.

Goals, Objectives and Policies:

Goal REC-1. The City of Coral Gables recreation system will serve the residents with neighborhood parks and open spaces that offer both passive and active recreation activities and facilities; that are linked together with a network of sidewalks, pathways and bike lanes; and provide public/open spaces that serve as gathering places in the downtown area.

Objective REC-1.1. Provide quality recreation programs and adequate provision of recreation facilities to meet the needs of residents.

Policy REC-1.1.1. Maintain the existing level of services (LOS) provided by recreation programs and activities to meet the continuing needs of all residents. The minimum acceptable LOS standards for recreation and open space facilities will be measured by number of facilities per resident in addition to the following radius standards.

Recreation facilities per resident:			
Recreation facility	Standard	Parks	Acres per 1,000 residents
Playing Fields	1 field per 5,600 residents	Passive	0.30
Equipped Play Area	1 area per 5,000 residents		

Recreation facilities radius standard:		
Park Type	Acreage/Mileage	Service Radius
Urban Open Spaces	0 - .25	5 minute walk or 0.25 miles
Neighborhood	.25 - 3	10 minute walk or 0.5 miles
Community Facilities	3 – 100	15 minute drive or 5 miles
Beach/Waterway Access	N/A	20 minute drive or 6.7 miles
District/Regional	> 100	30 minute drive or 10 miles
Trail Ways	At least 100' in length	10 minute walk or 0.5 miles
Private Park/ Recreation Facilities	Varies	10 minute drive or 3.3 miles

Urban Open Space are those designated areas which are between 0 and .25 acres and typically contain landscaped areas but have very limited or no facilities or other improvement. The recreational use of these sites is limited by their location and/or size. These sites serve to preserve the aesthetic quality of an area or to intersperse congested urban environments with aesthetically pleasing buffer areas. Some open space areas may serve as linear parks, vest pocket parks, while other areas are parkways, boulevard medians, plazas, malls, courthouse squares and promenades (See REC-1: Urban Open Space Level of Service Map).

Neighborhood Parks are those designated areas that are “walk-to” facilities where residents may walk or bicycle within a given neighborhood. Areas for diverse recreational activities which may include, but are not limited to the following: field games; court games; sports fields; playground apparatus area; picnic area; landscaping and garden areas; and senior citizen areas. The



Recreation and Open Space

Neighborhood Park is a place where neighbors and their families go to meet (See REC-2: Neighborhood Park Level of Service Map).

Community Facilities is an area that provides a diverse range of recreational and leisure activities or provides very specific active recreation facilities for all individuals and families. Facilities and activities may include, but are not limited to athletic fields, swimming pools, gymnasiums, performing and community centers. These facilities are designed to meet the recreation needs of the entire community (See REC-3: Community Facility Level of Service Map).

District/Regional Parks is an area selected for its natural and ornamental quality and its suitability of which the purpose is to function as a regionally-based recreational activities area. Its size is based on its capacity to accommodate a variety of activities, preserve its natural character, and provide adequate buffering between activity areas. Recreational activities could include, but not be limited to, swimming, picnicking, camping, boating, fishing, and a variety of trail uses (See REC-4: District/Regional Park Level of Service Map).

Policy REC-1.1.2. Continue to identify existing recreation facilities needs in the five (5) year capital improvements schedule for the Recreation Department, and correct or improve deficiencies as funding becomes available.

Policy REC-1.1.3. The City shall maintain existing recreation land and facilities through the use of proper management and funding techniques. The City shall ensure that recreation facilities are well managed, well maintained, and that quality recreation programs are available within a 10 minute walk to all residents. This shall be partially achieved by continuing efforts toward collecting, maintaining, and updating data concerning public and private resource inventory, recreation improvements, and demand factors, and by improving design criteria and evaluation to attain a high quality park and recreation system.

Policy REC-1.1.4. The City shall continue its dedication of land for parks and recreation via the development review process and recreation impact fee collection. The regulations are intended to ensure that new development provides necessary recreation lands, facilities, and/or fees in lieu thereof in order to accommodate the demands generated by new development.

Policy REC-1.1.5. The City shall continue to implement the Parks and Open Space Master Plan to make full use of the Youth Center by continuing the following programs to meet the needs of Youth Center users:

- Establish a diversified program of indoor athletics ranging from dance to fitness/weight training to volleyball.
- Design classes that will interest adults, seniors and families as well as children.
- Provide separate play and game areas for children (6-11); teens (12-18); adults (18-55) and seniors (55+).

Policy REC-1.1.6. Identify potential sites for playground equipment and open space parks.

Policy REC-1.1.7. Identify appropriate sites for walking/jogging paths on existing City property or other publicly owned properties.

Policy REC-1.1.8. Maintain and enhance landscaped open spaces for passive recreation in the Central Business District and in appropriate areas throughout the City.



Recreation and Open Space

Policy REC-1.1.9. Maintain the adopted LOS standards for recreation and open space as established in this Element by correcting or improving existing deficiencies in parks and recreation facilities.

Policy REC-1.1.10. The City shall update the Parks and Open Space Master Plan by 2011 which will consist of a comprehensive needs assessment; an analytical analysis based on existing data and standards; a detailed action plan and funding strategies to implement the vision. The Master Plan will focus on the feasibility of the following: creating more neighborhood parks; greater use of the trolley system for park related activities; more family focused activities; additional trails; fitness centers; outdoor concerts; educational programs and outdoor fitness programs.

Policy REC-1.1.11. The City will continue to provide quality recreation facilities and programs by maintaining the Parks and Recreation Department as Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) accredited through the National Recreation and Parks Association by applying for a renewal every 5 years.

Objective REC-1.2. Promote convenient public access to recreation programs and facilities for all residents of the City.

Policy REC-1.2.1. Continue to provide year-round access to City recreation sites and facilities.

Policy REC-1.2.2. The City shall continue to provide recreational opportunities within the Coral Gables Parks system for families, older adults and children.

Policy REC-1.2.3. Continue to provide special recreational facilities for the elderly through the Youth Center and future elderly housing and service centers as they are constructed.

Policy REC-1.2.4. Provide adult evening activities and programs.

Policy REC-1.2.5. The City shall cooperate with Miami-Dade County to maintain existing beach, shore and waterways access, including beach access routes and facilities.

Policy REC-1.2.6. The City shall continue working with the applicable City Boards and Committees and the established procedures for working with local cultural organizations to assist them in attracting additional cultural activities to the City through such techniques as:

- One-stop permitting for festivals and other outdoor events.
- Reduced rental fees for use of City buildings and facilities.

Objective REC-1.3. The City shall continue to maintain a high standard of aesthetic quality and improve the appearance of municipal recreation areas and public open spaces.

Policy REC-1.3.1. Additional public open space and natural reservations shall be designated and where feasible, acquired by the City in an effort to maintain and exceed the adopted LOS standard for parks and open space.

Policy REC-1.3.2. Improve appearance of public entrance gates, fountains and plazas as mandated by applicable City Boards and committees in order to provide distinctive gateways into the City.



Recreation and Open Space

Objective REC-1.4. Promote convenient public and private recreation and open space resources and opportunities for the optimum use of residents by providing facilities within a 10 minute walk for every resident within the City.

Policy REC-1.4.1. The City shall seek to partner with the Miami-Dade County School Board to provide resources for expanding and improving recreational facilities at all School Board facilities.

Policy REC-1.4.2. Promote more extensive use of the existing Matheson Hammock Park for City residents by providing public information using all available technology and in cooperation with the Miami-Dade Parks Department regarding available facilities and programmed activities at the park.

Policy REC-1.4.3. The City shall pursue discussions with the University of Miami to allow City residents to use recreational facilities on the University's campus.

Policy REC-1.4.4. Before the City considers selling any land designated on the Future Land Use Map as parks or open space, the City shall consider all of the following factors in promotion of “Defense against Encroachment”:

- Will it further the City’s goals toward maintaining accreditation by the Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) for the Parks and Recreation Department?
- Will it further the City’s goals of maintaining the adopted LOS standards for recreation and open space?
- Will it further the City’s goals to maintain a high quality of life and provide a high quality of recreational opportunities for the City’s residents and visitors?

Policy REC-1.4.4. Continue efforts to further the Coral Gables “Parknership” program which is a private-public partnership program tasked with raising funds for the purchasing of parkland. In recent years this program has been responsible for the acquisition of park properties.